

WARREN COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

COMMITTEE: PUBLIC WORKS - PARKS, RECREATION & RAILROAD

DATE: DECEMBER 23, 2010

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

SUPERVISORS BELDEN
BENTLEY
STEC
MERLINO
CHAMPAGNE
LOEB
MCCOY
CONOVER
WOOD

OTHERS PRESENT:

JEFFERY TENNYSON, SUPERINTENDENT OF PUBLIC WORKS
PAUL BUTLER, DIRECTOR OF PARKS, RECREATION & RAILROAD
FREDERICK MONROE, CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD
PAUL DUSEK, COUNTY ATTORNEY/ADMINISTRATOR
JOAN SADY, CLERK OF THE BOARD
KEVIN GERAGHTY, BUDGET OFFICER
SUPERVISORS GOODSPEED
KENNY
STRAINER
TAYLOR
THOMAS
VANNESS
ROB LYNCH, DEPUTY TREASURER
WAYNE LAMOTHE, DEPUTY DIRECTOR, PLANNING & COMMUNITY
DEVELOPMENT
PATRICIA NENNINGER, SECOND ASSISTANT COUNTY ATTORNEY
JULIE PACYNA, PURCHASING AGENT
JOHN LEMERY, LEGAL COUNSEL FOR THE TOWN OF CORINTH
DON LEHMAN, *THE POST STAR*
THOM RANDALL, *THE ADIRONDACK JOURNAL*
AMANDA ALLEN, SR. LEGISLATIVE OFFICE SPECIALIST
Please see sign-in sheet for additional meeting attendees.

Mr. Belden called the meeting of the Public Works Committee to order at 10:07 a.m.

The meeting agenda was distributed to the Committee members, a copy of which is also on file with the minutes.

Paul Dusek, County Attorney/Administrator, began by announcing that the Cordorus Creek Railway, one of the two RFP (request for proposal) responders being considered for the 2011 Railroad Operator contract, had submitted an amendment to their initial proposal earlier that morning. He said the additional information pertained to the company's financial background, as well as how railroad equipment would be obtained; Mr. Dusek added that he felt it was important to publicly note the receipt of this information for the Committee's consideration. He apprised that based on documentation previously received from both the Cordorus Creek Railway and Iowa Pacific Holdings, LLC, the Railroad Project Management Team had performed a thorough review of the financial background and reference information provided by each and he felt it was appropriate to enter into an executive session to review this information, as well as to discuss the possible appointment of a particular company.

Motion was made by Mr. Bentley, seconded by Mr. Conover and carried unanimously to enter into executive session to discuss the financial history and possible appointment of a particular firm, pursuant to Section 105(f) of the Public Officers Law.

Executive session was held from 10:09 a.m. to 11:31 a.m.

Upon reconvening, motion was made by Mr. Champagne, seconded by Mr. Loeb and carried unanimously to identify Iowa Pacific Holdings, LLC as the company with whom the County would begin negotiations relative to the 2011 Railroad Operator Contract.

Motion was made by Mr. Champagne and seconded by Mr. Bentley to establish a negotiating team to begin discussions with Iowa Pacific, as well as to identify members thereof.

Subsequent to a brief discussion, the Committee determined that the negotiating team would consist of six members including Mr. Dusek, Mr. Goodspeed, Jeffery Tennyson, Superintendent of Public Works, Rob Lynch, Deputy Treasurer and two representatives to be determined by the Town of Corinth.

Mr. Belden called the question, and the aforementioned motion was unanimously approved.

Motion was made by Mr. Loeb and seconded by Mr. Bentley to establish a working group to determine the business relationship between the County and the Town of Corinth which would include discussions on revenue sharing, track operations and repairs, as well as any other matter of concern between the two parties.

Following further discussion, it was the consensus of the Committee that the working group should consist of the same membership as the negotiating team.

Mr. Belden called the question and the motion was carried by unanimous vote.

In light of the decisions made by the Committee, Mr. Dusek advised that the proposal received from the Cordorus Creek Railroad would be set aside while the negotiating team began discussions with Iowa Pacific Holdings, LLC. He noted that communications had been received from two alternate parties indicating they were interested in submitting proposals for the 2011 Railroad Operator contract; however, he said, to date none had been received and the issue was now whether to meet with these alternate parties, or not.

Mr. Belden advised that Curt Austin, of Friends of the Upper Hudson Rail Trail, Inc., was in attendance and wished to address the Committee. Mr. Austin distributed documentation to the Committee members which he proceeded to briefly outline; *copies of the documents distributed are on file with the minutes*. He apprised that the organization he represented sought to convert the unused tracks extending to the north of the North Creek Station into a bike trail system, similar to the Warren County Bikeway. Mr. Austin said the bike trail would extend from the Town of North Creek to Tahawus, a magical destination steeped in history and adventure, located at the base of the High Peaks and the source of the Hudson River. He noted this would be the only bike trail in the Adirondacks and would attract considerable attention, possibly on a National level. Referring to the second page of his handout, Mr. Austin explained that the diagram depicted the amount of increased public attraction anticipated based on the implementation of the rail line in conjunction with a bike trail, as compared to the railroad alone. He concluded that the introduction of a bike trail would provide an exciting opportunity for visitors while promoting a more healthy and active lifestyle through increased physical activity.

Mr. Belden noted that the proposed bike trail route could pose a problem as Iowa Pacific Holdings, LLC had expressed an interest in purchasing the tracks in order to extend the tourism and freight train opportunities available to them.

Speaking as Supervisor of the Town of Johnsburg, Mr. Goodspeed advised he had been present for several presentations and debates on this issue and felt there were many factors to consider as indicated by both the groups

supporting and opposing the bike trail initiative. He said that although he was very appreciative of the information provided by Mr. Austin which posed a very interesting idea with unique possibilities, he suggested that the Committee refrain from making any decisions on the matter until a later date when discussions were more appropriate. Mr. Belden said he agreed with Mr. Goodspeed's suggestion, adding that decisions could not be made until after the negotiating process was complete and the County secured a contract for railroad services.

Mr. Austin responded by thanking the Committee for allowing him the opportunity to speak on the matter and noted that he was not seeking a decision, but rather support for this initiative to be considered as part of the decision making process.

As there was no further business to come before the Public Works Committee, on motion made by Mr. Conover and seconded by Mr. Bentley, Mr. Belden adjourned the meeting at 11:43 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Amanda Allen, Sr. Legislative Office Specialist